**A Strainer Full of Water**

A strainer won't hold water. Or will it?

**What to do:** Use a small strainer because a large one requires too much cooking oil. Coat the strainer with cooking oil. A good way to do this is to pour the oil into the bowl and then gently slosh the strainer around in the bowl until it is coated with oil. Shake the strainer carefully into the bowl so that all the holes are open.

Hold the strainer over the sink. Start pouring water very, very slowly from the glass into the strainer.

**What happens:** As you carefully pour the water, you'll see the strainer begin to fill with water. Look closely and you will see tiny beads of water pushing through the wires, but very few of them will leak out.

**Why:** It is the surface tension of the beads of water that makes this experiment work. The oil helps by giving the wires a smooth coating. It also makes the spaces between the wires a fraction smaller, because, even after you shake the oil off, some of it clings to the wires.